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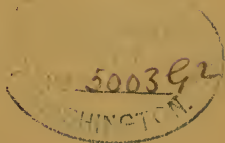


[Mayde, Richard]

INDIA.

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INDIA.



JAC TREE.

STRETCHING southward far into the Indian Ocean lies the peninsula of India, the great eastern empire of England. The kingdoms of Europe, France, Spain, Germany, all sink into insignificance beside it.

It is larger than them all put together. Its greatest length north and south and its greatest breadth east

and west, are over eighteen hundred miles ; while it has a coast line of over four thousand miles.

When we come to examine the country itself, we find that everything is on a scale proportioned to its vast size. It has three great rivers over a thousand miles in length, it has vast deserts covered with arid sands, it has mountain peaks whose summits are white with everlasting snows, while all its vast plains are peopled with a swarming multitude. In this country there are five times as many souls as in the United States, or over two hundred millions. Of what races this host is made up, we shall proceed to see.

Many centuries before the Christian era, vast hordes came from the north-west of Asia, and driving out the inhabitants of India overran and settled the land. Of the conquered

race some few descendants have survived, and may be found in parts of the country to-day, but they are the lowest in point of intelligence of all its inhabitants, and but little better than animals. Their new masters, the Hindoos, soon acquired great wealth and power, and reigned for many centuries undisturbed. The Institutes of Manu, as they are called, written in the ninth century before Christ, are a code of civil laws, which were, however, believed to have all the weight of the most holy inspiration. From them we learn the social condition of the people at this time. According to these all Hindoos are divided into four classes :

Brahmins, who sprang from the head of Brahma, to whom the priestly office belonged.

Kshatriyas, who sprang from the shoulders of Brahma, and who are the warrior class.

Vaisyas, who sprang from the loins of Brahma—this class included all merchants, lawyers, doctors, etc.

Sudras, who sprang from the feet of Brahma—the followers of all such trades as were forbidden to the classes above them.

Did any man belong to any one of these classes, it was the will of God that had placed him there ; to attempt to change his condition would be impious. Each class was fenced in with all manner of regulations. To the Brahmins belonged the interpretation of the holy books, and we may well believe that they so interpreted them as to confirm themselves in power. To touch a Brahmin was death ; to render him assistance was sufficient atonement for almost any sin.

The Institutes of Manu declare that he “who barely assaults a Brahmin with intent to

hurt him, shall be whirled about for a century in hell. Never shall a king slay a Brahmin, though convicted of all possible crimes ; let him banish the offender from his realm, but



BRAHMIN.

with all his property secure, and his body unhurt. A Brahmin, whether learned or ignorant, is a powerful divinity, even as fire is a powerful divinity, whether consecrated or popular."

Two per cent. interest only could be asked from them on loans. They were not allowed to obtain wealth except by intellectual means, though they could receive presents, and as to them belonged the power of blessing and cursing, we can easily fancy that they did not fall into poverty. To the three higher classes belonged the title, "twice born," but to the poor Sudra belonged neither title nor wealth—it was the will of God that he should be ever a servant, and in beggary.

Such was the composition of Indian society, and such it remained till nearly the seventh century, when the Mohammedans began to attack the country on its north-western border, and after varying successes carried on through several centuries, at last obtained the mastery, and ground down the

poor Hindoos beneath them. For a thousand years they ruled, until finally the East India Company, incorporated by the English government, which had gained a foothold in the land, gradually brought it all under the English sway.

Modern Indian society is therefore composed of many discordant elements, Hindoos and Mohammedans, each in turn conquerors and conquered, unite in hating the English. The laws of caste which the code of Manu laid down, are still as rigorously enforced as in his days nine hundred years before Christ, but in the twenty-seven centuries that have passed since then, they have become much complicated and somewhat changed. The Sudra is now no longer a beggar, he may be a wealthy merchant, but his social position is not one particle raised,

and the Brahmin may be poor and perhaps occupy a menial position, but he is none the less "twice born." A recent traveller tells of how in Calcutta he saw a wealthy Sudra merchant who had in his employ a Brahmin as porter, but the rich man could



HINDOOS.

never pass his servant without a gesture denoting the greatest deference. No crime can cause one to lose his rank. Only in one way can this be done, by eating with one of another class or by violating some similar

ceremonial law. The offender does not descend in rank, but becomes an outcast, despised alike by every one, and shunned by every one, for he who should receive him



HINDOO GIRLS (*High Caste*).

would himself become an outcast. The same traveller tells us that while in India a high caste Hindoo was present at an entertainment

given by some Europeans, and partook of some food in their presence. For this he lost caste, and only regained it after paying a heavy fine, humbling himself before an idol with presents and performing other degrading offices. There is not a Hindoo in all India who would not consider that he had lost caste by eating with any sovereign of Europe.

One of the greatest agents in breaking up the system of caste is the railways. The Indians are fond of travel, and sooner than undergo the delays of the days when railways were not known, they put their prejudice aside, and the Brahmin, who formerly thought it pollution to have a Sudra sit upon the same mat, may be seen quietly sitting beside him in the cars.

India is especially the home of strange

gods, for the Hindoos are worshippers of many idols. In the single Presidency of Bombay are over twenty thousand idol temples, while it is said that in all India the deities and objects considered sacred, amount in number to nearly thirty million.

Our only way to explain how all this superstition came, is to go back to far distant ages, and see what the earliest records tell us of the primitive religion of the people. We find then, that many hundred centuries before Christ, there was believed to be one God, Brahme, who was all powerful. At the present day the educated Hindoo believes in this god as superior to all the many thousands worshipped. His attributes were Brahma, the creative power—Vishnu, the preserving power—and Siva, the destroying power. It was but a short time before these

attributes became separate gods. Hindoo imagination made each of them real persons ; it gave them wives who became goddesses, to be worshipped, and sons and daughters to become a new race of heavenly beings to whom divine honors should be paid. Vishnu, they tell us, ten times took the form of man, and each form in which he appeared is revered as a god.

Then, seeing that matter could not be destroyed, for instance that wood when burned did not disappear, but only changed its form, they looked on matter as eternal, and worshipped it. There is a fire-god Agni, while water is perhaps the most prominent element in the Hindoo religion. The Ganges is an object of double worship since, in addition to its divine character, it is especially holy, as it sprang from the head of the god Vishnu.

The sacred stream is never without its thousands of worshippers, who hasten to wash away all sin in its purifying waters. From the indestructibility of matter they soon argued that the soul could not be destroyed, but that it must pass on for endless ages, entering either the body of man or of animal. Some sects even go so far as to wear over their mouths a cloth lest they may breathe in some insect and thus perhaps destroy a former friend or relative, while others carry long brushes with which they carefully sweep the ground before them, lest an unfortunate step should crush a soul. With such views it may be imagined that they look with horror on eating animal food. The heavens were worshipped and many individual stars, while the sun was a mighty god. One sect never eat in the morning until they have

worshipped him, and always fast while he is hidden behind the clouds. The seasons of the year, coming with unfailing regularity seemed to them divine, and the reproductive power of Nature, under the emblem of the Lingam, has more worshippers than any other god in India. Sometimes the gods were symbolized by animals. Thus Laksmi, the wife of Vishnu, is represented by the cow—Vishnu by the fish, and so on, and thus these animals became gods. The story is told of a devout Brahmin who had wandered as far north from his country as St. Petersburg, and who was seen watching a number of boys fishing. When any fish was caught, he hastened to buy it, and reverentially returned it to the water. Trees are worshipped, and often what seem to the foreigner but polished stones, to the natives' mind are

emblems of their gods. To the Brahmins belongs the right of performing all the offices connected with the temples and worship of these many gods, and to them alone is to be laid the sin of this idolatry. It has been devised and in every respect is arranged to benefit them at the expense of the millions whom they keep in ignorance.

The festivals of these gods and goddesses are celebrated with great splendor and with varying rites. The cruel goddess, Kali, is supposed to be especially delighted with human suffering, and her devotees practise upon themselves all manner of cruelties, cutting themselves with knives and even swinging in air by means of a hook thrust through the fleshy part of the back.

On her altars, before the strong arm of the English rule intervened, human victims

were offered, and this fearful goddess, represented by a statue surrounded with serpents, her long hair erect and her four hands each holding a dissevered human head, was satisfied only with the blood of young men in the prime of life. Before the victim was struck down, the priest saluted the statue, crying : “ Hail, Kali, goddess of thunder, iron sceptred, hail, fierce Kali, cut, cut, slay, destroy, drink blood ! destroy, destroy ! ” Hardly less fearful were the rites of Juggernaut. An eyewitness of the festival of this god in the days when the East India Company ruled, gives a vivid picture of it. For miles before he reached the spot, the road was thronged with pilgrims, thousands in number. At the appointed time the idol was brought from the temple, and placed upon an enormous car sixty feet in height, to which six long cables

were attached, by which it was to be drawn. Thousands seized the cables and dragged the huge car, which moved slowly on, the priests and attendants of the god standing upon it, to the number of one hundred and twenty. The hideous idol was set high above all, a black and grinning face with bloody mouth, its body dressed in gaudy colors. Presently, a pilgrim announced that he was ready to offer himself a sacrifice. Throwing himself upon the ground, the huge mass passed over him, leaving only a flattened corpse. The body, after lying exposed for a time, was taken up and carelessly cast aside, to be devoured by jackals.

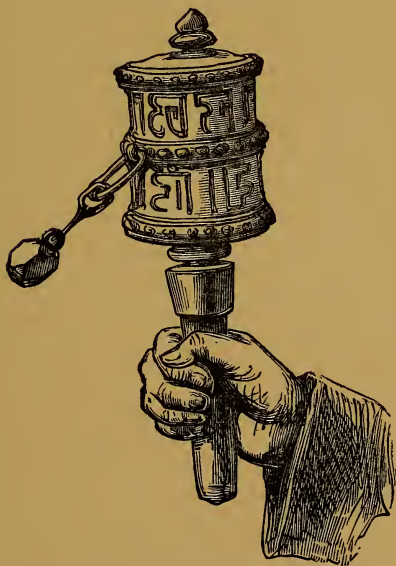
The great car of Juggernaut is still brought forth on festival days, but human sacrifices are no longer allowed, and the great mass is surrounded with police to prevent

the people throwing themselves beneath its wheels. At intervals they manage to do this, and then it is astonishing to see men who court this fearful death and are not afraid to be crushed beneath the grinding mass, leap up and take refuge in flight among the crowd as the lash of the police falls upon their backs.

But we should be giving a very false idea of Hindoo religion did we say that only such rites as these were celebrated. A very different spectacle is seen at the festival of Vasanti, the goddess of spring, which extends over forty days. Here all give themselves up to enjoyment and revelry in very much the same way as at the Carnival of Rome. Crowds throng the streets in masks and throw at each other light bags filled with a crimson powder which breaks and scatters over all. Numerous games are introduced, and in the general

merriment a part of the distinctions of caste is overlooked.

These gods and festivals are not held in



HAND PRAYER-MILL.

equal honor in all parts of India. One great deity who is an object of special worship in

one section may be held in slight esteem in another, and a festival in which all join in Northern India may be almost unheard-of in Southern India.

For instance, among the Himalayas they worship gods unknown in other parts of the country, whom they think can only be appeased by constant prayer. As to offer this would be beyond the ability of man, they have fashioned a little machine which shall pray for them, and which the priests and many of the people carry about with them in their hands. It consists, as may be seen from the picture, of a circular box, which is made to revolve by the motion of the hand, and inside of which is a paper whereon is written a prayer for the six classes of living creatures, "the souls in heaven, the evil spirits in the air, men, animals, souls in

purgatory, and souls in hell." On the outer surface of the machine is inscribed "O mane



WATER PRAYER-MILLS.

pad me han (to him of the Lotus and the

jewel),” who is supposed to be so well pleased with worship of this kind, that these machines are often made on a large scale and kept turning day and night by water-power like a mill wheel.

The Hindoos always burn the bodies of the dead, and it is a common thing for the traveller to see at night, as he approaches a city, the flames and smoke arising from the funeral pyres of the departed. Formerly the widow always threw herself into the flames and perished with her husband. This practice has been almost entirely stopped by the government—all concerned in such a case being considered as murderers—but it is still occasionally done. No doubt, part of the impulse which prompts a woman thus to sacrifice herself is a religious one, but a great share is doubtless due to the wretched lot to



which a widow is doomed. "From the day of the death of her husband commence her sufferings and privations. She is made to employ herself in devotional austerities which know no end. Her appearance on all joyous occasions is considered a bad omen. Even at the marriage ceremony of her brothers and sisters she cannot take an honorable place or join other females who, because their husbands are living, can enjoy all the reasonable freedom and pleasures of life. The Hindoos invariably consider it an auspicious omen to come across the wife of a living husband when they leave home for the accomplishment of an intended purpose, but if they happen to come across a widow they despair of success, and proceed with reluctance, or return to curse the widow. She cannot talk familiarly with her dearest

and nearest relatives. Among the Brahmins her diet is rigidly regulated. She is welcome to a meal only once a day, and she must content herself with some unwholesome eatables in the evening merely to prevent the cravings of hunger. To be brief, the widow lives a life of toil and mortification. From morn to eve, she has something or other to do. Domestic drudgery is her inseparable doom. If she is able to read, she may spend a leisure which is short and hard-earned in the perusal of a *pothce* containing tales in honor of some of the Hindoo gods."

Besides the worshippers of Hindoo gods are many of other religions. The Mussulmans come next in number and are of course followers of Mohammed. Their mosques, capped with the graceful dome rising above the houses of the cities, are seen from far and

are much more beautiful than the small and dirty temples of the Hindoos. Perhaps one great reason for this disparity may be found in the fact that when the Mohammedans conquered the country they destroyed the



THE PARSEE.

Hindoo temples, using the material for the erection of their own. Besides these are the Parsees, found principally in and about Bombay, who are comparatively small in numbers, but important on account of their great success in business. They are followers

of Zoroaster, and are called fire-worshippers. They reverence the sun, moon, and stars, and may often be seen at sunset prostrate on the seashore, praying to the departing king of day. Fire is held in reverence by them, and in their temples is a flame kept burning, which they claim has never been extinguished. Of course the upper classes regard fire only as the emblem of an all-creating power, but with the lower class it is to be feared that worship does not go beyond the emblem, and that fire itself is their god.

In the disposal of their dead, they have a custom which is particularly revolting. Their cemetery is at a little distance from the city, upon a hill. From this rise several circular towers called Towers of Silence, fifty or sixty feet in height, their interior a hollow well. Across the top of these towers are

placed gratings, on which the bodies of the dead are exposed. The vultures soon descend and devour the flesh, while the bones fall through the grating into a common pile below.

An outgrowth of all these superstitions is the class called Fakirs, who affect great holiness and are held in the greatest reverence by all. Their holiness is of a peculiar character, and is not attended with that cleanliness which is generally believed to be akin to it. In their appearance they are most repulsive and filthy, but this in the eyes of their worshippers is but a fresh claim for reverence. Some make it their business to carry the sacred water of the Ganges to sprinkle upon the altars of distant temples; others excite reverence by bodily tortures. All this is very profitable, for the gifts of the people are gen-

erous, since they are prompted by fear of offending these holy men. At all sacred fes-



FAKIRS.

tivals these fakirs assemble in great numbers. Here will be one whose arm is withered and

dead, from being held above the head mo-



A FAKIR.

tionless for many years :—here another whose nails have grown through the palm of his

clenched hand. Another has come from a long distance and has measured the weary road by lying at full length upon every part of it, like some great creeping worm. On all such occasions it generally happens that some one, by the ingenuity with which his torture is devised, will obtain a higher degree of sanctity than his fellows. On a recent occasion this was gained by one who hung himself by the feet, head downward, from the limb of a tree for several hours each day.

A still greater torture was undergone by one who submitted to the ordeal of five fires. Taking his place upon a raised platform, four fires were lighted about him, each large enough to roast an ox, while the blazing tropical sun beat upon his head. In the centre of all this he stood on one leg, occasionally casting oil upon the flames

from a small vessel which he held in his hand. Then, reversing his position, he stood motionless upon his head with his feet in the air, for three hours. Forty days, from sunrise to sunset, he underwent this torture, while the superstitious crowd paid him the reverence due to a god.

Europeans who have lived in India, all agree that it is not so much the hope of the instant entrance into heaven, which their religion promises these devotees at death, as the admiration and worship of the ignorant, that prompts them to these sufferings and that as a class these Fakirs are thorough knaves.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN we come to speak of the productions of India, we find it almost easier, to tell what it does not produce than what it does. As almost none of its great population eat animal food, grain of course must be raised in immense quantities. Wheat and rice are the staple articles of food, while fruits, such as the banana, cocoanut, mango, etc., are produced in the greatest variety and in endless numbers. An enormous business is done in opium, which is sold to the Chinese markets, carrying destruction with it. Nearly sixty million dollars' worth a year are exported. We are accustomed to think with horror of

the destruction of body and soul by alcohol, but this is as nothing compared with the ruin that opium effects. Its preparation is a matter of great care. When the growing poppy heads have reached the size of a hen's egg, each one is wounded with a little saw-like instrument. From the wound the milky juice of the plant oozes out, and on the following day is carefully collected. It is now carefully dried by exposure to the air, then thrown into vats and kneaded into balls and cakes, then again dried, and packed in chests and is ready for the market.

Indigo, too, is a very important product. The plants grow to a height of three or four feet, and when in blossom are cut and laid in cisterns. Heavy weights are placed upon them to keep them in position, and the cisterns are filled with water. Ferment-

ation soon begins, and the water is one mass of rising bubbles. After a time the water is drawn off. The indigo in solution in it settles, and being removed, is dried and prepared for the market.

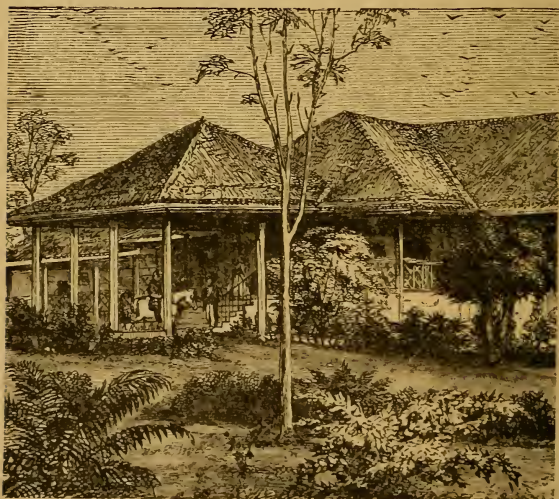
Rich as is the vegetable growth, the trees of India are equally magnificent. The Banyan tree, as will be seen from the illustration, has the power of sending down from its branches roots to the ground, while the tree continues to spread in every direction. A single tree in this way becomes almost a forest. There is one such where the parent stem having died, an idol temple has been erected in its place, and stands surrounded on every side by the wide-spreading grove. Near Bombay there is a tree whose branches are so long that their weight has brought the ends to the ground, thus forming a huge



tent in which a thousand people might camp with comfort. The graceful cocoanut too, is everywhere seen, its tall head rising above its lower brethren. At Bombay is annually celebrated the feast of the Full Moon of the Cocoanuts, lasting two days. It takes place near the end of September, and as the majority of the people there gain their living in part or wholly from the sea, throngs attend it. Coming to the seashore or wading out into the waves, each casts into the water two or three cocoanuts as a peace-offering, thus hoping that the sea may be kind to him in the coming year and accepting his gift may protect him from evil. The whole bay is sometimes covered with these cocoanuts.

Owing to the excessive heat of India great care has to be taken by European residents to avoid exposure to it. Nearly

all business is transacted in the early morning. In the garrisons all drill is over by nine o'clock, and all labor is postponed till the



sun is low in the heavens. The bungalows of the wealthy are built in the manner best calculated to secure the greatest comfort:—lattices and blinds keep out the sun's rays

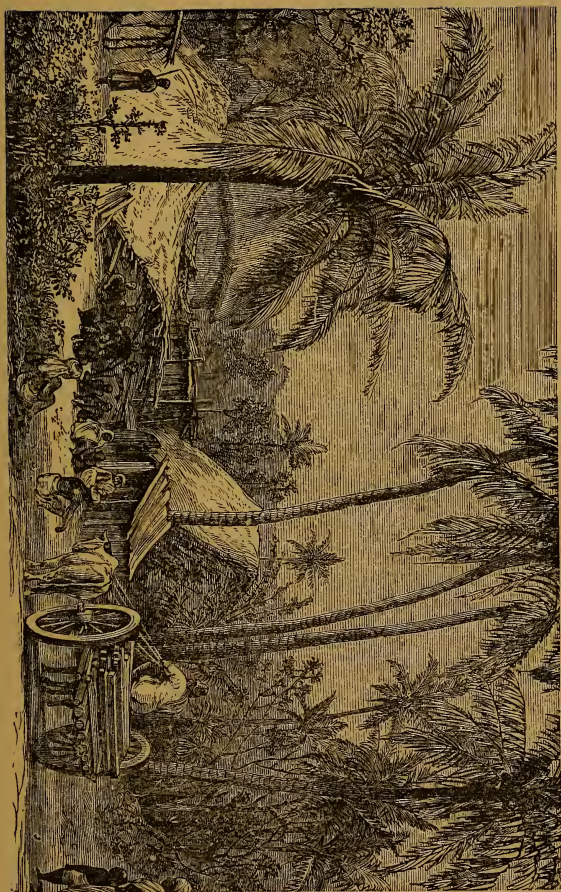
and admit any breeze that may be astir, while overhead a huge punka or fan is kept always in motion by the Hindoo servants. Everywhere in India is seen the punka—in private houses, in business offices, and even in churches. Servants are employed in numbers which astonish us who live in colder climes. Fortunately a very small sum of money contents them, or the expense of living would be truly enormous. “A family however small, living in any style, must have a *kansuma*, a butler or steward; *kitmugar*, a head table servant, beside a table servant for every member of the family; *bobagee*, or cook; *meeta*, man sweeper; *metrane*, female sweeper; *musalche*, to clean knives and forks; *surdar*, head bearer, with eight common bearers, if he keeps a palanquin, to pull punka, etc; *durwan*, gate keeper; *dobey*, wash-

erwoman; *bhestie*, to bring water; *abdar*, to cool the water; *chuprasse*, a confidential mes-



BHESTIE.

senger; *coolies*, to carry marketing and other burdens; *chokedar*, watchman; if he keeps a carriage he must have a *gharry-walla*, or



coachman, with a *syce*, or groom for each horse, who runs with the horse, and so on, almost without end. Some of the servants must be Mohammedans, for the Hindoos will not touch certain dishes, and the Mohammedans too have antipathies which must be consulted."

The natives, however, do not seem to find the heat any inconvenience; and their houses, so far from being fitted with arrangements for comfort, are in the case of the lower classes, squalid and miserable.

It is only in the last twenty years that railways have been introduced into India; before that time all travel was slow and wearisome. Though the English soon introduced carriages; yet in many parts of the great empire there were either no roads, or such as would break to pieces any vehicle

unless especially made for such rough work. Horses were by no means plenty nor of the best. The native vehicles are curious affairs.



BULLOCK GARRY.

The bullock garry is one of the most comfortable of these, and as the animals are trained to their work, a much better rate of speed is

often kept up, than would be supposed. Another curious vehicle is the palanquin; a



long box in which the rider cannot sit up with comfort, but lies stretched at full length

while relays of coolies taking it up by means of poles at either end, carry it swiftly on through the night. Nearly all travelling is done in India at night on account of the heat during the day, and curiously enough, travellers carry their own bedding. At intervals along the roadside are built bungalows for their reception, but these contain merely bare rooms where an attendant in charge spreads out the mattresses of the traveller and furnishes either rice or coffee, or more often only a fire on which to cook the food which the provident wayfarer has brought with him.

Sometimes in those days of no railways, when the voyage was up the Ganges or the Indus or some of the many rivers of the land, it was made in boats driven against the currents by poles and helped along by favor-



ing breezes, to court which clumsy sails were raised. The length of time thus taken was



THATCHED BOAT.

very great, but time to the Hindoo or Mohammedan is of the slightest importance, and to all the impatience of the traveller

there could be but one answer, it was the will of God.

But the strangest of vehicles on the land and the strangest of boats on the sea, are the one man bullock cart of Bombay, and the



A BOMBAY ONE-MAN CART.

small sail boat seen off the Malabar coast, which, of tiny dimensions but bearing a huge sail and carrying only one man who wears the gigantic hat, so common to the Hindoo, presents the appearance to be seen in the picture

Of course, all these primitive vehicles are thrown into the shade by the gigantic railways that now traverse the whole length and breadth of the country. The scene at an Indian railway station is often curious and amusing enough. The natives who intend to



travel "assemble hours before the time of starting; and squat down and smoke their pipes till the hour arrives. Then they rush to and fro in earnest excitement, dragging their children, conveying pots and pans, beds and bedding, as they yell and jabber. With looks of frantic despair they crush and push

along in a continuous turbaned stream ; and wholly forgetful for the moment of all caste distinctions, they pour into the place assigned to them. Should a high caste man discover to his anguish that he has to enter a compartment already to all appearance crammed with low caste or no caste men, it is in vain that he turns and shrinks back. The English guard pushes him in, locks the door, whistles sharply and waves his hand, crying, ' All right.' Puff, puff, goes the engine, whirling off more than a dozen carriages filled with Brahmins and Sudras, holy and unholy, twice born and low born, along the iron path of destiny at five and twenty miles an hour."

One of the greatest drawbacks to life in India is the great number of poisonous snakes that are found. They creep into the houses and even into the beds ; they drop down from



the thatched roofs ; they lie coiled up in the roadways, and are everywhere. It seems al-



THE COBRA.

most incredible, but nearly forty thousand

people die every year from their bites. From such a scourge there seems no way of escape.

An account is given by a recent traveller, of a most singular rite, which he saw celebrated at Bombay, called the Feast of Serpents. Upon a certain day in July or August of each year, great numbers of people assemble in an open part of the city. Here come long processions of women, draped in rich silk veils. On all sides, the palanquins of wealthy Brahmins stand about, while over the heads of the great crowd float huge standards and torches of flaming pitch.

In the centre of all this throng, are several hundred serpent charmers, each of whom has with him several of the deadly cobras in a basket. The pious Hindoos bring to them bowls of buffalo milk, of which the



serpents are very fond ; thus seeking to propitiate the dreaded enemy, and to secure safety from their wrath. Each bowl is soon surrounded by the snakes, who drink eagerly until removed by their masters, when their rage is terrible. The glaring of the torches, the crowd of spectators, the twisting slimy serpents, and the nearly naked figures of the charmers, go to make up a picture to be found nowhere out of India.

Hardly less destructive than the serpents are wild beasts. In a single province the deaths averaged nearly twenty-five hundred a year from them. Tigers, wolves, and leopards, are the greatest destroyers. Though the government offers rewards for the heads of all these, yet the natives hardly ever dare to kill one, as they look upon them as gods, whose wrath is to be

feared, and when a district is visited by them, make but little if any effort to rid themselves of their enemies. In this way a single tiger killed in a short time, one hundred and twenty-seven people, and caused all journeyings on the highways to cease. Another despatched one hundred and fifty persons in three years, forcing the people to desert the villages, and throwing out of cultivation two hundred and fifty square miles of territory.

A most royal tiger hunt was arranged only a few years since, for an English nobleman who was visiting India. The party set out attended by several native princes, with four hundred elephants, and after riding for a time, reached the jungle in which a tiger was known to be. The long line of elephants was wheeled about so as to

form a circle, the command 'forward' was given, and the whole body advanced till their sides touched, forming a solid ring, inside of which among the tall grass the tiger could be heard moving about. Several times the trapped beast attempted to escape through the ranks of his enemies, but the living wall stood firm, and a bullet soon ended his career.

Almost as singular a hunt as this was once given by the Guicowar of Baroda, one of the native princes, to a French traveller who was staying at his court. This, however, was an antelope hunt, to which the party went on horseback, and the game was captured by the cheetah, or hunting leopard. As the place of rendezvous was at some distance from the town, they reached it by the railway; the prudent prince causing his chief minister to ride upon the engine, thinking thereby to

insure his own safety from possible accident. Arrived on the ground, the cheetah was borne in a palanquin, his eyes covered with a leather hood, upon the shoulders of servants, to the scene of action. Soon a herd of antelopes was discovered, and the party getting to leeward of the game, lest they should be scented, the cheetah was loosed. Stealing quietly along, he was soon near the herd ; but they saw their danger and took to flight. Too late !—the agile beast made one or two leaps forward and fastened upon his victim's throat. The attendants rushed forward, covered his eyes again with the hood, dragged him with difficulty from his intended feast, and the hunt was resumed. With such an ally, the hunter almost never returns empty handed.

It is in the north of India, near the



Himalayas, that the most wild beasts are found ; for here amid the wild recesses of the mountains they are more secure from man. The traveller in these regions is always beset by eager applications on the part of bands of natives, to enter his service to shout and thus frighten off any tiger that may be lying in wait for him.

Yet, notwithstanding such drawbacks, there is no mountain scenery in the world which is finer. Far above him tower the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas ; their summits seeming to support the skies, while as he looks down from the narrow road creeping around the mountain side, where often a single misstep would send him headlong hundreds of feet, he can see far beneath in the valley a roaring stream. Possibly he may not view the river rushing through the gorges

with the same feeling of admiration that he would, did he not know that soon the path



will descend, and that the only bridge is a wicker basket, hung from a rope, in which he must cross the raging flood.

CHAPTER III.

INDIA was long ago celebrated for her great cities. In the Rámáyan, an epic composed some ten or eleven centuries before Christ, we read of the great city Palibothra, ten miles in length and two in breadth, with its sixty gates and its mighty walls capped by five hundred towers, and though the modern cities cannot boast such grand proportions as this, they are many in number and of goodly size. The traveller from America or Europe looks with astonishment upon many strange sights. Here is the adjutant, a great bird, which, nearly as tall as himself, stands solemnly in the streets on one leg, heedless of the hurrying throng about him. Kites

and crows in vast flocks fairly darken the air, while their ceaseless caw, caw, is never ended. These are the scavengers of the town, devouring all the garbage thrown into the streets and not hesitating where a tempting morsel is too openly displayed by some careless marketman, to swoop down suddenly and carry it off in their talons. At night the sleep of the new comer is broken by fiendish shrieks and screams which make the blood run cold. The hyenas whom the light of day has driven into sewers and other hiding places, have ventured out in the darkness to seek their food, and with their human-like voices make night hideous. Some one has interpreted their language thus: "Here's a dead Hindoo," howls an advanced guard. "Where, where," bark all the pack, and then all break out into the chorus: "We'll gnaw

his bones." Through all these nocturnal serenades, the native Indian sleeps as peacefully as if no sound were uttered.

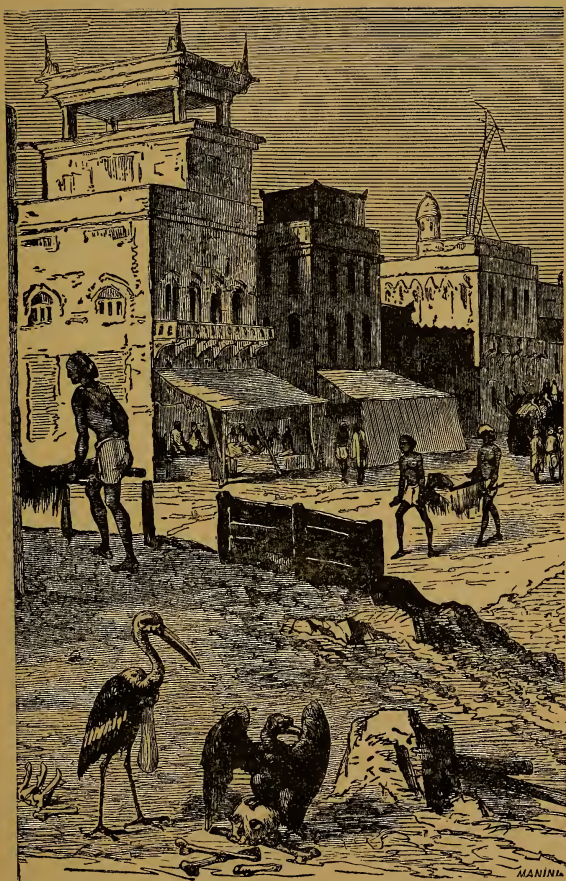


STREET, CALCUTTA ; EUROPEAN QUARTERS.

Calcutta has all these doubtful attractions,

but fortunately does not depend upon them alone for its claim to notice. As the capital of modern India, it is the headquarters of the government, and its streets are no more strangers to the handsome carriages of its English residents, than to the more primitive native vehicles. Perhaps the difference between an English and an Indian city, is better shown by the two contrasting pictures which we here give, one of the native quarters and the other of a street in the European section, than by any written description.

Calcutta long held the position of chief city of India, but its supremacy has of late been disputed. Its position is a great disadvantage to its commerce. One hundred miles from the mouth of the Hoogly, large vessels find it often no easy task to reach its docks; while the dangers to which it is ex-



posed from the visits of the dreaded cyclone are a great injury to it.

“During my stay in Calcutta,” says a



late traveller, “I witnessed one of these cyclones of lesser violence. Since the preceding evening the barometers had undergone tolerably sharp oscillations, and at one o’clock

in the afternoon the sky, in which a brilliant sun had shone since the morning, became overcast with clouds with astonishing rapidity. I was on the esplanade, and immediately on these first symptoms, became aware of a great movement in the roadstead : the vessels were lowering their topgallant masts and yards, and seemed to be getting ready for a struggle. Suddenly on looking around me I saw every one taking to flight and running as though pursued by some enemy. Nevertheless the air was still and calm, and I could scarcely understand the panic, when at the extreme end of the esplanade I distinguished a cloud of grayish dust advancing along the ground with great rapidity. I took to running in my turn, and with a certain degree of alarm, for I all-at once found myself absolutely alone in the

vast plain and I had to cross over several hundred yards before I could reach shelter of houses. I was on the point of gaining one, when I heard cries behind me and turning round, at ten paces off I saw a palanquin set down in the middle of the road ; the porters had run away and abandoned a poor English lady, who in her fright did not know how to get out of her vehicle. At the moment I was about to render her assistance, the dust overtook us ; I felt myself enveloped and pressed by an invisible force, then my feet left the ground and I fell to earth. When I half raised myself the dust had disappeared, but the rain was falling in torrents, and the wind blew with a violence that prevented me from standing upright. The poor lady had succeeded in getting out of her palanquin, which the wind dashed

against the balustrade of the esplanade, and she lay on the ground much frightened. I succeeded in approaching her, half dragging myself along, and when I had raised her we were able by mutual help, to reach a hotel in a neighboring street. I had a great deal of trouble in getting them to open to us, for all the doors and windows had been carefully barricaded. For a quarter of an hour the violence of the wind continued on a progressive scale; at last the walls began to vibrate in such an alarming manner, that the hotel keeper assembled every one in a room that generally occupies the centre of all the houses in Calcutta, and the very thick walls of which, cyclone proof, were built in such a manner as not to suffer in the event of the rest of the house falling. Most fortunately we had not occasion for making trial

of the solidity of this last refuge ; the wind lowered sensibly ; the rolling of the thunder

A STREET BARBER.



and the dazzling brilliancy of the lightning which accompanied the rain from the beginning, ceased in their turn, and in a few mo-

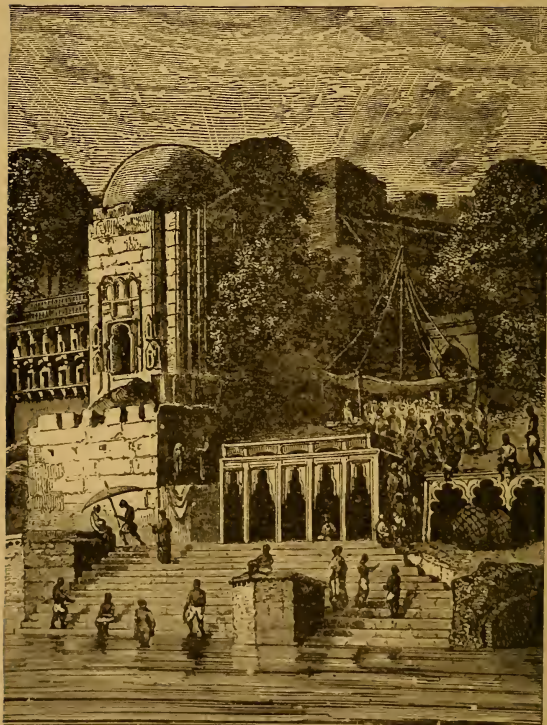
ments a calm succeeded, and the skies became blue and limpid again as though nothing had happened. The streets however presented a mournful spectacle ; tiles and branches of trees, signboards, fragments of palanquins, and garments, bestrewed them from end to end. Among the rubbish might be seen hundreds of dead crows, buzzards, kites, which had not been able to resist the wind and had been dashed against the houses."

The cities which, like Calcutta and Bombay, have been largely built by European traffic, are of far less interest than those which in central and northern India have stood almost unchanged for the last thousand years. Such is Benares, the holy city of India, and to every pious Hindoo the most sacred spot in the world. As the ancient Egyptian looked on the Isle of Philæ, so the Hindoo

thinks of Benares. No matter how vile his caste, or what his life, he who dies within ten miles of this sacred city finds an immediate entrance to paradise; and when in the course of events it becomes necessary for him to re-enter again the form of man, his soul will occupy the body of a Brahmin. The sick and dying are brought from miles to die upon this holy spot, and the sickening fumes of the burning ghauts, where their remains are consumed to ashes, never die away night or day. A column of black smoke always hangs over it; while amid the livid flames that flash up from the burning piles, can be seen the naked figures of the attendants at their ghastly work.

The streets of Benares are crowded with long trains of pilgrims, who come not only from all parts of India but even from China

and Siam, to pay their devotions and thus



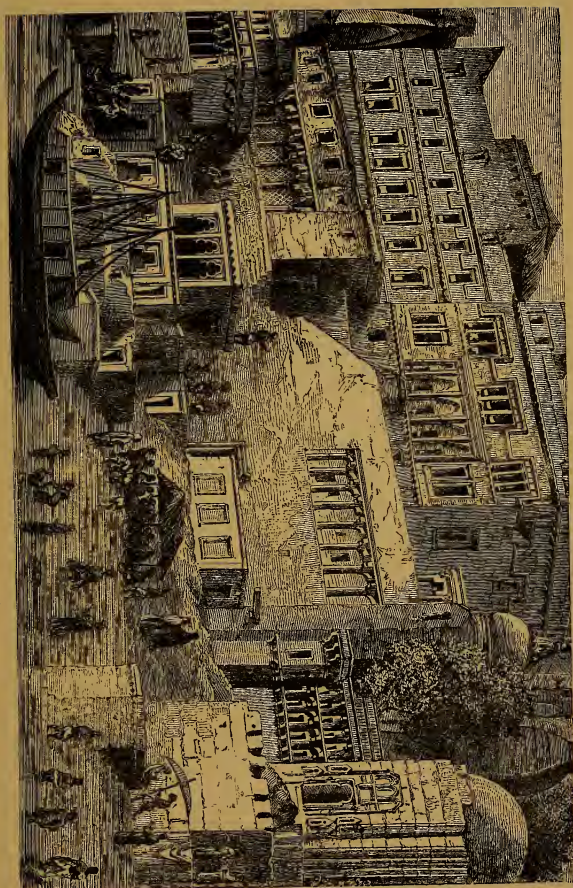
wipe away their sins. The traveller who

approaches the city at sunrise, by the river, sees a strange sight. When the first rays of the rising sun gild the spires of the temples, the vast crowds of pilgrims plunge into the sacred stream, and wash themselves with its purifying waters. The Brahmins seated upon the shore, sell them certificates of purification, and otherwise encourage them in this pious task, while down the terraced bank come other Pilgrims to follow their example.

The city as seen from the river is wonderfully beautiful. The high bluff on which it is built is terraced to the water's edge, while the palaces of many native princes, and the spires of temples everywhere overhang the stream.

When we have climbed the many steps, and are in the city itself, we find our wonder increased. No street is wide enough to ad-

mit a carriage, and through many of them an elephant could not pass, while the lofty houses with interlacing balconies nearly shut out the light from the roadway. The traveller's steps are not made more pleasant by the prospect of meeting at any moment one of the sacred bulls, which roam at will about the streets and at their pleasure forage upon any unfortunate shopkeeper, for none dare oppose them. At one time the number of these bulls was so great, that it became necessary for the English government to take some steps for their removal. To have killed them, would have outraged the feelings of every Hindoo, and have raised a riot, so they were carefully driven out into the jungles to graze, where the tigers, who did not recognize their sacred character, soon disposed of them. Monkeys, too, in



Benares are held sacred, and certain parts



STREET IN BENARES.

of the city fairly swarm with them. On

all sides rise the temples. Here, its entrance crowded with eager worshippers, is the temple of Siva, while close beside it stands another building in which is the Well of Wisdom. Around this the devout worshippers press, and drink its not over-clean waters which a Brahmin draws for them, while a short distance away another twice-born son of Brahma dispenses the miracle-producing waters of the Well of Munikurnika to a no less zealous throng.

When a Brahmin has a dispute with any one not of his own caste, and satisfaction is not given, he takes the singular mode of obtaining redress, called "sitting in dharna." Taking his seat in front of his enemy's door, he refuses to eat or drink, until his claim is satisfied, and persists in this even till death ensues. Since in the popular belief, his

enemy would be considered his murderer, and as the murderer of a Brahmin will be not only haunted by the ghost of the slain in this world, but be doomed to endless tortures in hell, it is not often that the Brahmin fails to come off victorious. This encounter was once held on a mighty scale at Benares. The English government had ordered a tax levied on houses, till then an unheard of proceeding in India. The Brahmins became excited. Next year, they said, it will be a tax on our wives and children. So sending out word into the country, they assembled in vast crowds and to the number of three hundred thousand sat in dharna in the plain about the city. But they had chosen an unfortunate adversary, for the English officials not being fearful of being haunted by the ghosts of this army while living or suffering the torture promised in the

next world, made no move to yield. A tremendous rain coming after the sitters had begun to feel very strong pangs of hunger, increased the dissensions that had arisen, and the host broke up in confusion. The government, however, thought it judicious to abandon the tax, so that the sitters in dharna came off conquerors after all.

When the Mohammedan conquerors overran India, they became masters of a people, who, having for centuries lived in peace, had accumulated great wealth, which was now to be given over to their new masters. These Mohammedan dynasties were on a scale of magnificence unknown at the present day, and a most substantial proof of this is the wonderful buildings which they have left behind them. Nearly all the cities of Northern India are thus distinguished. The Taj at

Agra, is believed to be the most beautiful building in existence. It was raised by Shah Jehan, and is the monument which he built in memory of a wife, to whom he ever offered the greatest devotion when living, and over whose tomb he shed many a tear. The graves of the two lovers are side by side in the centre of the building, while nearly two hundred feet above them is the lofty dome that covers their last resting place. The walls within are carved in the most beautiful manner, while a marble screen that surrounds the tombs is so exquisitely cut as to resemble lace. Bouquets of flowers, and running vines, are formed by the insertion of precious stones, and the whole of the Koran is thus inset in the walls. All this is, without and within, of the whitest marble, and though now so many hundred years have passed since it

was erected, not a stain sullies its snow-white



surface. To build this tomb, twenty thousand men labored more than twenty years.

Shah Jehan could easily afford to spend fit

teen millions of dollars in this way, for his wealth was enormous. He dispensed justice and ruled his realms, seated upon a throne the description of which reads like a passage from fairy-land. "The throne was six feet long, and four feet broad, composed of solid gold, inlaid with precious gems. It was surmounted by a gold canopy supported on twelve pillars of the same material. Around the canopy hung a fringe of pearls: on each side of the throne stood two chattahs, or umbrellas, symbols of royalty, formed of crimson velvet richly embroidered with gold thread and pearls, and with handles of solid gold eight feet long, studded with diamonds. The back of the throne was a representation of the expanded tail of a peacock, the natural colors of which were imitated by sapphires, rubies, emeralds and other brilliant gems. Its value was esti-

mated by Tavernier, a French jeweller, who saw it in its perfection, at over thirty millions of dollars." The grandfather of this rich prince left in his treasury at his death, jewels, plate and other treasures valued at three hundred and fifty millions of dollars.

There is almost always another side to such a picture as this, and a sad one. That one man might thus live in grandeur, how many died in misery. How tarnished the precious stones appear when they seem to symbolize each the groan of a slave or the sighing of the prisoner and the captive.

The Guicowar of Baroda, a prince of our own day and one who lived in something of the reckless extravagance of the early dynasties, lately formed a plan to recruit his finances which may perhaps give us a clew to one of the ways in which all this wealth was gained. To place a new tax upon his people

would be useless, for they had nought wherewith to pay it. He therefore turned to the officers of his court, and issued an edict ordering under pain of severe measures that every one return to the royal treasury within a specified time, the money which during the past ten years he had stolen in the discharge of his duties. Each man, uncertain whether his sovereign possessed secret proof of his wrong doing, hastened to obey, and at the end of the time, the lucky prince found his treasury again full.

Shah Jehan was not content with erecting great buildings alone, he even founded cities. Delhi, formerly called Shahjehana-bad, was built by him. Its name is widely known from the bloody deeds that have been wrought there in our day.

In the year 1857, nearly the whole of

India rose in a revolt against the English rule. Though signs of coming danger had not been wanting, the uprising found no one prepared. In the whole country there were but thirty thousand English troops to hold in subjection two hundred millions. The blow fell suddenly. At Meerut on a Sunday evening in May, when all the English soldiers were at church, the native regiments mutinied, opened the jails letting loose all within, and the work of death began. Man, woman or child that belonged to the hated race was cut down without mercy, while the night was everywhere lighted by the fires that destroyed their dwellings. The work was soon over. A few made their escape out of the city, but within all was death and desolation.

Roused by the taste of blood, the muti-

neers set out for Delhi arriving at its walls the next morning. The same scenes of violence were repeated here, and so rapidly did the revolt spread that in a few weeks nearly all India was in open mutiny. After the outbreak had taken place men remembered many signs of the coming trouble, and wondered that they could have been blind to their deadly meaning. We read in the history of the Scottish border of the fiery cross and how, when danger threatened, it was passed from man to man throughout the land, till every one had armed himself. In just this way it was remembered that in India the chapáthi, a cake of flour of a peculiar shape, had been passed from village to village throughout the whole land, as if to give warning of a coming danger.

The English at Delhi, that were so for-

fortunate as to escape the first fierce onslaught of the mutineers, fled to a ridge outside the city and fortified their position as well as possible. Escape was out of the question. They were miles from any place of safety, their only hope was to defend themselves till rescue came. The government knowing that the capture of the city was of the utmost importance strained every nerve to get together a force that should retake it, and every man that could be spared was sent to join the brave defenders of the ridge outside of Delhi. For three months they withstood the attacks of forces ten times their number, until in September reinforcements arrived, and the besieged became the besiegers and advanced against the city. A forlorn hope carrying bags of powder advanced to its walls. The powder was thrown down, a fuse



lighted, a terrific explosion shattered the great gates and before the mutineers fairly realized the state of affairs, the English were in the city, and Delhi was retaken.

Dreadful as were the scenes at Meerut and Delhi, it was at Cawnpore that the most terrible tragedy of the mutiny took place. In an open plain, protected only by an earthwork five feet in height and exposed to the full heat of the tropic sun, seven hundred men, women and children took refuge when the storm burst upon them. For twenty days this handful kept at bay the force of enemies around them, working their guns without ceasing until at last their number was so lessened by death that resistance seemed hopeless. A safe passage by boat to Allahabad was promised them and they surrendered. The next day they were marched down to

the landing place, shown in the picture, where the boats were waiting that were to carry them to safety. Wounded and weary they toiled along under the blazing sun, their hearts heavy within them as they thought of the friends that had died in their arms, but hopeful as they looked forward to being soon in safety. Their hope was short-lived. Hardly had the first ranks stepped upon the boats, when a deadly fire was opened upon them from every side. One hundred women and children, when the slaughter ceased, were taken back wounded and bleeding and shut up together in one barrack. A few days later when the English troops retook Cawnpore and sought for their countrymen they found only their mangled remains. Every one had been ruth-



lessly killed and their bodies thrown together into a well near their prison.

Such were the horrors which every city of northern India saw. The mutineers had, however, defied a power whose strength they did not know. In one year the authority of England was entirely restored, while thousands of the rebels had fallen in battle or had been put to death for their crimes. Years of quiet have followed this bloody outbreak, and the memory of its dark deeds has nearly died away except in the hearts of those whose friends fell in the storm. The long interval that has passed has been devoted to the arts of peace, and the days of terror are things of the past.

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